

Explain the Duties of the Theater-level Intelligence Collection Manager.

What is Required in the Collection Management Process?

By

Captain Michael S. Grogan, USMC

Submitted in partial completion of requirements at
The American Military University
Manassas Park, Virginia

1994

Explain the duties of the theater-level intelligence collection manager. What is required in the collection management process?

INTRODUCTION

The process of managing theater-level intelligence collection operations converts intelligence requirements into collection requirements. It also involves tasking and coordinating actions with appropriate collection agencies and sources. Finally, the collection management process involves monitoring results and retasking as required as well as disseminating the information to intelligence consumers. In short, the collection management process involves managing the entire intelligence cycle. The intelligence cycle is a five-step process which converts information into intelligence and disseminates processed intelligence to consumers. The phases of the intelligence cycle include: Planning and Direction; Collection, Processing and Exploitation; Production, Dissemination and Integration; and Evaluation.

This essay will discuss the individual responsibilities and authority of the collection management process at the theater level as well as the duties of the combatant command and subordinate joint force collection manager (CM). Secondly collection management functional areas and principles will highlight the critical role of the CM in addressing operational commander priority intelligence requirements. Collection management involves planning which allocates scarce collection assets against targets in response to theater commander intelligence requirements, the intelligence collection cycle provides a framework for us to understand the CM's role in fulfilling the theater commander's mission. Due to the brief nature of this paper, I will address the CMs responsibility only through the exploitation phase in the intelligence cycle.

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Within the theater Area of Operations (AO), overall responsibility for management and validation of intelligence collection requirement requests lies with the theater operational commander. This phase in the collection management process most closely follows that of

planning and directing in the intelligence cycle. In support of the mission the operational commander tasks the staff intelligence officer (J-2) with fulfilling the intelligence requirements necessary for mission accomplishment (AOR). The theater commander grants the J-2 collection management authority (CMA) over all intelligence collection requirements within the AO. This means that the theater J-2 has the final say over the validating, modifying or non concurrence with intelligence collection requirements. (JP 2-01:III-15) Authority for collection management may be delegated to a subordinate Joint Force Commander so that collection requirements may be satisfied at the lowest possible level.

If validated collection requirements cannot be satisfied at the command level, then the requirement must be forwarded to the next higher echelon until the requirement is satisfied, is no longer needed, or is deemed to be impossible to collect. (JP-02:III-15) During the mission analysis process, the J-2 supervises the development of the commander's priority intelligence requirements (PIR); during this process the intelligence planner must keep in mind the kinds of intelligence required to fulfill the mission. (JP 2-01:III-7)

The types of intelligence and the level of detail required for analysis differ between echelons. For example, theater-level intelligence might be too broad for an individual combatant element at sea or in the field. Conversely, national level intelligence might be unusable at the theater level. In general, intelligence requirements for a higher-echelon command are less detailed and more broad than those required at a subordinate commanders' level. (JP 2-01:III-8) Using the operational focus and the PIRs of the commander to direct his analysis, the theater J-2 provides valuable knowledge of the threat and the battle space to the commander. Focusing on the commander's mission and concept of operations, the collection manager is involved during each phase of the intelligence collection cycle in directly support the operational commander. .

DUTIES OF THE COLLECTION MANAGER

Based on the operational commander's priority intelligence requirements (PIR), collection plan development is the duty of the collection manager (CM). As one may surmise, the collection phase of the intelligence cycle involves identifying and positioning collection assets and resources to satisfy collection objectives. (JP 2-01:III-1) The duties of the collection manager involve acquiring information about the enemy and supplying that information to intelligence processing and exploitation elements. (JP 2-01: III-9) Collection managers create collection plans based on the commanders intelligence requirements; the CM then acquires the requisite information in response to the PIR.

The collection manager's duties generally include using data, collecting information and producing the requisite intelligence to support the commander's priority intelligence requirements. To be effective in carrying out the needs of the operational commander, the CM must understand the respective utility and conceptual differences between data; information and intelligence. Data is a representation of facts, concepts or instructions in a formalized manner suitable for communication, interpretation, or processing by humans or by automatic means. Data is normally found in intelligence data bases or publications and can vary from order-of-battle data to general military intelligence specifications on adversary weapons systems. Information is unprocessed data which is used in the production of intelligence. Intelligence is the product resulting from the collection, processing, integration, analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of available information concerning foreign countries or areas.

To carry out their duties, collection managers develop and manage a collection plan which blends intelligence requirements with target characteristics; they also compare the collection plan with the strengths and weaknesses of organic collection assets. (JP 2-01:II-10) The CM develops

a strategy to optimize collection capabilities and availability; the CM then works with the joint force operations officer (J-3) and forward collection requirements to the component commander with tactical control over theater intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) assets.

If collection requirements cannot be fulfilled with organic ISR assets, the CM forwards the PIR up the chain of command for tasking of intelligence resources. (JP 2-01:II-11) Finally, the CM directs the processing and dissemination of collected data to the intelligence consumer. In short the collection manager is critical in all phases of the intelligence cycle. CM is divided into two functional areas collection requirements management (CRM) and collection operations management (COM).

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONAL AREAS

CRM concentrates on the customer's requirements, is oriented around all-source intelligence collection and in general, interacts with intelligence production elements. Managing and validating collection requirement requests within a theater rests with the combatant commander. The theater Joint Intelligence Center (JIC) validates and submits collection requirements to the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) if those requirements cannot be satisfied with locally available collection assets. (JP 2-01:III-15) The theater-level J-2 validates or changes standing collection requirements sent by subordinate joint or component commanders.

Subordinate J-2 officers validate collection requirements and submit requests for added collection assets to the theater-level J-2. The theater JIC monitors the progress of research, validation, submission and satisfaction of all requests for collection. (JP 2-01:III-15) CRM also includes the collection planning process which involves compiling collection requirements. Collection planning is a continuous process which integrates the efforts of all collection assets, organizations,

units and agencies. The CRM cycle begins with the CM's first efforts to satisfy the commander's PIR (created during the planning and direction phase of the intelligence cycle). (JP 2-01:III-16)

Using the PIR as a starting point, intelligence analysts prepare Requests for Information (RFI) which are queries to establish if information already exists. If the information does not already exist, the RFIs form the basis of a collection requirement; the collection manager is compelled to obtain the information from other sources. (JP 2-01:III-16) A good collection plan includes a list of information desired along with the time that the information is required. Additionally the consumer who is to receive that finished intelligence is provided in the collection plan and how the information will be used. (JP 2-01:III-16)

After the collection plan is created, the collection manager must create a strategy to obtain the requisite information. The strategy involves specific efforts which ensure the best employment of limited collection assets. To accomplish this goal, a registry of prioritized requirements is created which is updated from inception to termination. After requirements are defined, the CM determines the availability and respective capabilities of collection assets. The information that is desired is then examined for elements known as specific information requirements (SIRs). For each SIR, a set of elements is developed to compare characteristics of the requirement's target with the characteristics of available assets to determine collection suitability. (JP 2-01:II-17) The key elements of target parameters include: target characteristics-discriminable physical, operational or technical features of an object or event.

The second key target element used to select a collection asset is range to the target-measured as distance from a predetermined reference point to the target. The final key characteristic of the target is timeliness-when the intelligence must be received by the decision-maker in order to be of value. Once the characteristics of the target have been evaluated,

potential collection assets must be studied to find a good match. Sensor capability factors are technical or performance characteristics, range, dwell time, timeliness, environmental factors and sensor vulnerability. (JP 2-01:III-19/20)

COM focuses on selecting the right specific intelligence disciplines and systems within an intelligence discipline to be used in fulfilling intelligence requirements. COM addresses how to collect information to fulfill a requirement (collection strategy) more than the content of what is collected. Organizations within the various intelligence collection disciplines conduct COM, which is readily accessible to intelligence collection system operators. (JP 2-01:III-13) The COM process organizes, directs and monitors the assets which collect data in support of intelligence requirements. (JP-2-01:23) COM develops strategies for collection against requirements, predicts how well a particular asset will satisfy PIRs; evaluate the performance of collection systems; allocates and tasks collection platforms as well as processing and exploitation systems. It is here in the COM process that the CM is involved in the processing and exploitation phase of the intelligence cycle. This is where collected data is transformed into a product which can be readily used in the analysis and production of intelligence. (JP 2-01:III-2)

If PIRs exceed available collection assets, the Joint Force Commander (JFC) controls all theater reconnaissance and surveillance through the collection manager. The JFC CM establishes collection requirements priorities and assigns an appropriate collection asset against a particular target. The CM coordinates with the J-3 and forwards collection requirements to the component commander exercising tactical control over theater ISR assets. A mission tasking order is sent to the unit selected to accomplish the collection operations. The final choice of specific platforms, equipment and personnel belongs to the specific ISR collection unit and is the product of such operational considerations as maintenance schedules, training and experience. (JP 2-01: III-14) In

conducting their duties, the CM should follow four basic principles: early identification of collection requirements; prioritization of collection requirements; use of a multidiscipline approach; and tasking of organic assets.

PRINCIPLES OF COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

In conducting their duties, the CM should follow four basic principles: early identification of collection requirements; prioritization of collection requirements; use of a multidiscipline approach; and tasking of organic assets. Early consideration of collection requirements enables the intelligence staff to respond quickly to the needs of the operational commander. (JP 2-01: III-11) Proactive and early CM involvement also ensures flexibility in the choice of intelligence disciplines and collection systems.

Prioritization sets a distinct ranking for each collection requirements. Rational collection decisions can be made only if requirements are prioritized and a thorough cost-benefit analysis is made. Time and collection processing and production asset limits require that collection priorities are set. In setting collection priorities based on the commander's guidance as well as the current situation, the CM ensures that limited assets are targeted against the most pressing requirements. (JP 2-01: III-11)

Intelligence collection disciplines complement one another and the CM should not become too reliant on specific intelligence platforms or disciplines. Each intelligence discipline's weaknesses can be supplemented through the strengths of the others. Flexibility in choice of intelligence discipline or platform is critical to mission success. If a particular platform becomes unavailable another may take its place. Rigidity in choice of intelligence discipline can create discernible collection patterns which play into an adversary's counterintelligence, camouflage or deception efforts. (NDP 2:16) Finally, use of organic asset allows a swift response to collection

requirements and decreases the burden on outside collection resources. (JP 2-01: III-13) Use of readily available assets also decreases the burden on other organization's collection assets. If organic assets are not available, the collection manager should request collection support from higher commands or agencies.

During the process of developing intelligence requirements, the theater-level intelligence officer (J-2) is involved fully and must be kept informed of all collection tasking required of assets assigned to the AOR. While the theater J-2 enjoys full collection management authority over all intelligence collection requirements against targets within the AOR, this authority may be delegated to a subordinate JTF Joint Force Commander (JFC). Joint doctrine states that, collection requirements must be satisfied at the lowest possible level. Validated collection requirements that cannot be satisfied must be forwarded up the chain of command for action in a process that continues until the intelligence requirement is satisfied. (JP 2-01: III-15)

CONCLUSION

In this essay I have addressed the duties of the collection manager in fulfilling the operational commander's intelligence requirements. The basis of all collection management activity is the operational commanders mission statement. Effective collection management requires intelligence participation in the planning phase so that the operational commander fully understands the battle space and the adversary. Working with precise intelligence requirements the collection manager must develop a comprehensive collection plan and match available collection assets against achievable collection targets. CM involves two distinct mission areas: Collection Requirements Management; and Collection Operations Management. In conducting their duties, the CM should follow four basic principles: early identification of collection requirements; prioritization of collection requirements; use of a multidiscipline approach; and

tasking of organic assets. Finally, collection management is an iterative process which requires evaluation to determine if the commander's requirements are being met.

REFERENCES

Joint Publication 2-0 Joint Doctrine for Intelligence Support to Operations 5 May 1995

Joint Publication 2-01 Joint Intelligence Support to Military Operations 20 November 1996

Naval Doctrine Publication 2 Naval Intelligence 30 September 1994